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*A Proposal concerning the Church of England;
suggesting the Creation of a Constitutional Organisation
for Promoting the Maintenance and Increase of the
Home Pastorate; and for the Promotion of Foreign
Missions.*

A PAPER

READ BY THE

REV. JOSEPH B. FERRY,
VICAR OF MARTIN, LINCOLN,

AT A CHAPTER OF THE
RURAL DEANERY OF LONGOBOBY,
IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN :

Held at WADDINGTON, April the 11th, 1893 ;

AND PRINTED BY REQUEST OF THE CHAPTER.

TOGETHER WITH A SECOND PAPER ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

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Home of Laymen
Proposed Pastoral Board.

Dear Sir.

Mr. Spotteswoode has suggested to me that I, as the originator of this proposal, should write to you with a view to invoking your support of the resolution on this subject which he is to propose on the 7th inst.

The enclosed pamphlet contains the explanation, as I see them, of the need and desirability of a Pastoral Board. It also contains an explanation of the rest of the scheme of which this proposal is but a part.

But I would point out that W. Spottiswood's resolution is confined to this one proposal of a Pastoral Board.

The two great needs which this Board is designed to meet are: -

1. The need of a sufficient Pastorate for the needs of the Nation.

2. And the need of a sufficient maintenance for that Pastorate.

The need of additional Clergy is obvious.

But the second of these two needs is not realized as it should be.

What we clergy feel is that, though we give ourselves up

to the keeping of the Church when
we are ordained, yet the
Church has no authorized
machinery or system whatever
for discharging towards us her
responsibility as to our maintenance.

We are simply left to get on as
well as we can among the
curacies, incumbencies and
clergy charities which do duty
for the Church on our behalf.

We ought not to be left to
chance and charity for the
necessaries of life.

This Scheme is designed to
re-constitute a general Pastoral
Treasury, and, in each Diocese,
a Diocesan Pastoral Treasury,
to which all church people should be

taught to give as a matter of duty,
and from which the clergy may
receive their dues, according to the
length of their service, and according
to the responsibility and circumstances
of their respective positions.

I believe that by passing this
resolution with a will the House
of Laymen have it in their power
to involve great blessings for the
good of the Church of England.

It was I also had the honour of
being named to be of the Disputes of
Lincoln last Summer for the chaplaincy
on Lord Roberts' yacht: a privilege
which perhaps I may enjoy at some
future date, as the cruise did not
come off last year.

I am, Sir
Yours sincerely.

J. S. Talbot Esq. M.P.

J. W. Fowey.

*Organized Almsgiving.--Or a Constitutional Organization for
promoting the Maintenance and Increase of the Home
Pastorate; and for the promotion of Foreign Missions.
A proposal concerning the Church of England.*

THE Church of England is bent on work. Never was she more determined than now to devote herself to hard, self-sacrificing work among the people of England and of England's Empire, and among peoples in all parts of the earth besides. And never did she devote herself to her vocation more abundantly than now. Testimony after testimony confronts us of her increasing consciousness of her position and of her responsibilities; and of her conscientious endeavour adequately to discharge the manifold functions attaching to her. In her deliberative Councils self-examination and self-devotion are ever present marks. In the Legislature she asks for little more than freedom for purposes of self-correction, and for sovereign sanction for the rearrangement of her diocesan territory for purposes of improved pastoral supervision. As to the past, histories and reviews, reports and returns, the press and the people, are all yielding abundance of testimony as to the great work which England's Church has done, both anciently and lately. The volume of her work during the present century is remarkable indeed. During the last fifty years she has spent not less than fifty millions sterling in restoring and building Cathedrals and Churches for the better promotion of worship; and since the year 1811 she has spent more than thirty-five millions sterling in the education of the children of the humbler classes; and untold millions have been

devoted to innumerable good works of every variety. At the present time five millions of pounds represents the Church's annual charity at home ; and six hundred thousand pounds represents the minimum of her annual charity towards all sorts and conditions of men abroad. But the greatness of our missionary prosperity abroad is best estimated from the fact that the Anglican bishoprics and missionary jurisdictions outside Great Britain and Ireland have gone up from *nil* in 1786 to not less than one hundred and fifty-nine at the present day. Eighty-four of these belong to our own colonial and missionary Episcopate ; sixty-two of them have been formed in the United States of America, the very significant missionary instinct of whose Church is represented by the remaining thirteen missionary jurisdictions.

But notwithstanding all this gratifying testimony, the Church herself is in no mood of complacent contentment. On the contrary, she is well nigh alarmed at the work that still lies before her. She sees that the multiplied and multiplying millions of her home population require an enormous increase in her Pastorate and in her Churches. And from abroad she hears whole nations, within and without the English Empire, crying out to her with voices of most stirring pathos—"come over and help us," and this great cry, which includes the awful cry of India, being increasingly borne in upon her, is stirring the Church to a more burning desire to rise to the occasion as she has never yet done.

Her past missionary efforts, she observes, have really been the efforts of but some of her children, banded together for the work by voluntary bonds ; and not the efforts of her corporate and entire self. But, of course, all observe how necessary those voluntary efforts have been to the initiation of our Church's missionary work, and how wonderfully they have been blessed. And yet all must feel that six hundred thousand pounds is but a poor annual offering for the church people of privileged England to make on behalf of the nearly three quarters of the human race who have yet to be converted to the only Saviour.

Hence, the whole outlook considered, there is a growing desire amongst the clergy and the laity of the Church of England that her work, her greater work, should be taken in hand in a more responsible way than is the case at present, so that, prosecuted with authority and cogency, and with the united energy of all in one, her efforts may be much more efficient than they are now, with the consequent happy result that souls may be "added to the Church" in far greater numbers than is now possible; and that those who are "added" may be the more efficiently edified.

And there is yet another side to the responsibility of the Church of England. Our keenest and most erudite "watchmen" are constantly assuring us that our Branch of the Church is, according to their observation, evidently designed to exercise an influence for unity upon the rest of Christendom. And they tell us that she holds up the pentecostal olive branch with unique promise. And on this account it is being increasingly felt amongst us that, wherever the Church of England goes, she should wear the cloak of apostolic order.

Therefore, with her vast range both of responsibility and of hopefulness, ought not the Church of England to strengthen her position and her efforts by taking her own work into her own hands, and by doing that work on all sides soundly, and everywhere alike? And, indeed, ought not the Church of England to have her own authorized propaganda?

And an authorized propaganda would effect greater results by involving greater interest. The church people of England, comparatively speaking, take but a very poor interest in missionary efforts. For the five millions six hundred thousand pounds which they now give annually, and that for all church purposes put together, is less than a tithe of the tithe of their annual wealth.

The church people of England have need to be more formally taken into the confidence of the Church, as it were, than they are. They have need to be authoritatively and systematically informed, not only as to their duty of giving, but as to the Church's

work, done and to be done, in her several departments. And in these days of growing desire for united effort, and of scientific acceleration and convenience, the Church of England, by the application of authoritative and comprehensive method, might easily hold both her work and her people well in hand.

With regard to our necessities at home. As is now well known, much must be done, and done at once, in order to restore, in some way or other, a very great number of our benefices to a condition in which their occupants can really live and work. How to remedy the distress among the clergy brought about by the depreciation of endowments? is the anxious question of the hour: and all concerned are rejoiced to know that Convocation is already dealing with the matter.

And another anxious question is:—Whether it is not becoming a necessity that, as the benefices to the clergy are as three to five, some attempt should be made to provide some beneficiary and supplemental emolument for all unbeneficed clergymen who have been, say, fifteen years or more in orders? Some such provision as this seems absolutely necessary in order to dissipate the present forbidding aspect of a life of insufficient maintenance which the Ministry of the Church presents to many a would-be candidate. The elder assistant curates, many hundreds of whom cannot possibly be beneficed, and whose official stipends decrease as they grow older and need more, surely ought to be able to claim, as a right, some beneficiary and supplemental provision which will bring their lot somewhere nearer to that of the beneficed.

And there is a third great and most anxious home question, that of the increase of the Pastorate. Again it is well recognised that there is most urgent need for the extension of the Episcopate, and for an enormous increase in the numbers of the Clergy. The masses in the towns, and the great unshepherded numbers scattered about our great country parishes, our soldiers and our sailors, our infirmaries, workhouses, reformatories, etc., all urgently need greatly

increased pastoral supervision. On all sides more men are wanted. Where are they to be found? and when found, how are they to be maintained?

Now, whilst splendid attempts have been made, and with really great results, to meet these and kindred needs by numerous societies and organizations, yet the present great inadequacy of result most certainly demonstrates the necessity of all this work being taken energetically in hand by the Church herself. And to this end is not the need of the hour a Pastoral Board, with its Executive Council: a Board authoritatively appointed to foster and direct the whole work of increasing the numbers of both bishops and clergy, and of seeing that the whole of the clergy are adequately maintained? Such a Board, we may hope, will really be the outcome of the action Convocation is now taking in the matter of impoverished benefices. If it is, then let that Board be so constituted that it will live on, and be able to take up by degrees the other sides of the Pastoral question as well, including also such matters as the longer preparation of candidates for Holy Orders, and Clergy Pensions.

Then each Diocese would require its own Board of Trust and Administration to co-operate with the Pastoral Board in all its work within the diocese, so as to blend general with local efforts, and so as to give the widest assurance that the whole work will be done thoroughly and in accordance with all particular requirements. The work of these Boards would be done with great care, so that all new gifts to the Church, at least, should be as safe as possible from all possible political contingencies.

The advantages of centralizing all these efforts under the Church's own Pastoral Board, and the Co-operating Diocesan Boards, would be many and great. The present multiplicity of organizations, designed to accomplish indetical work, notwithstanding its success, is productive of much confusion among the people; it wastes a great deal of money in the working expenses of its dozens of systems; and it fails to appeal to the public mind with anything like the force

which would attach to the appeals of a Pastoral Board, speaking for the whole, and special pleading for the parts, of our home pastoral needs.

This is what the disinterested and businesslike writer of a series of articles in the "Statist," on the subject of London Charities, says on this point:—"In our first article we gave, as prominent examples of overlapping amongst large Societies, the Church Pastoral Aid Society (£56,000), the Society for the Employment of Additional Curates (£112,000), the Curates' Augmentation Fund (£9,000). We now discover, to give more emphasis to this particular example, some dozen other Societies which make large grants for Curates; and moreover that in most dioceses a special fund is raised for precisely the same object. All this adds greatly to the force of our contention that some means of combination should be found, by which the enormous waste on separate offices and staffs might be prevented."

And when it is remembered that there are between two and three hundred Church of England Societies, it is evidently high time to apply the principle of the combination of kindred Societies.

Nowhere would the work of the Church suffer through the shifting of funds from the Home Mission and Pastoral Societies to the Pastoral Board; as the Board would have its eye and its hand on all sides of the work at once, and it would make it a first duty to sustain all existing work; and from its eminent position and unlimited scope, it could see to the whole work being done in due proportions, and to the best advantage. And if the Board diverted funds to itself from such Societies as could not surrender themselves to it at the onset, it would simply mean that the supporters of those Societies were electing to transfer their support, and also the work for which it was given, from those Societies to the Board.

The whole question of—Boards or Societies? rests for decision with the supporters of the Church's work, and that means, in the main, with the Bishops and Clergy, who are, to a paramount extent, the guides of the charitable.

With regard to our necessities abroad. The foreign work of the Church of England is becoming vastly responsible. And yet it is left to the manipulation of Societies and individual enthusiasts ; the voice of constitutional authority having practically little to do with it. On all accounts this is a great drawback. It is most unhealthy, and most inconvenient, for the Missionaries themselves to have to work under the auspices of various Societies and Associations. And amongst the Missionaries and the supporters of their work, there is a growing impatience for an Executive Board of Missions which shall gather up all our foreign missionary management into its own hand, and cultivate and administer our missionary enterprise with all the force and order attaching to the Church of England in her corporate capacity.

Bishop HORNBY, when starting but the other day for his new diocese in the heart of Africa, deplored the irregular way in which the Church sent forth her Missionaries ; He said—"He would rather be supported in his work by the poorest and smallest diocese in England, as a diocese, than by all the University and private schemes put together. He feared that the world had never seen the Church (of England) putting forth Missionary effort as a Church. * * * The whole solid power of the Church should be put forth."

Then, again, the fact that the Church is the real Missionary Society, and that all her baptized are the members of that Society, has been so crowded out of court by the idea of cash-subscription-societies, which has hitherto prevailed, that this elementary fact has still to be taught to the bulk of our Church people, so that their sympathies may be drawn out, towards the multitudes of the heathen world, on principle.

America has set us the example here. The Bishop of Missouri, when speaking on the subject of American Missions at the annual meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the year 1888, after showing that they commenced with a "Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society" in the year 1821, said :—"Then in the

General Convention of 1835 the American Church took a strong step forward. Under the rousing leadership of the elder Doane, father of my right reverend brother of Albany, she enounced these two underlying principles to be her guidance in the conduct of Missions :—

I. That the Church herself is the Great Missionary Society, and that all her baptized members are members of that Society.

II. That the Bishops of the Church are the special and perpetual trustees of her Missionary work.

Along the lines of these two principles we have been working for fifty years. Up to the full worth and meaning of them, I fear not. It is not easy for all to take in the thought that by their baptism they are pledged to lend a hand to forward the preaching of the Gospel to every creature. Self, Sin, and Satan will not allow the thought to be taken in and lived up to, if they can prevent. Yet we have set our aim, and in our struggling fashion are pressing towards it. The school line of the pagan poet, '*Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto,*' we want to lay hold of, and baptizing it in the sweet waters of the blessed Saviour's world-wide mercy, to set it in the forefront for the outcry of our sympathies, and for the catholic claim of the Church.

In our General Convention, consisting of the two Houses, the House of Bishops and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, is placed the management of Missions. The two Houses in joint session are themselves the 'Board of Missions,' and they elect triennially the 'Board of Managers,' consisting of fifteen Bishops, fifteen Presbyters, and fifteen Laymen, to have executive charge. Of this Board of Managers the presiding Bishop of the Church is President.

There are suggestions, and there are not wanting some arguments, that voluntary Societies, perhaps, would accomplish the missionary work better. But I am quite convinced that, if the issue should ever be raised, the American Church will sustain with an overwhelming majority the two enunciated principles of 1835.

It is sound truth to give heed to, that the Bishops are the perpetual trustees of the Missionary work. The Bishops are the successors of the Apostles. They are Apostles—What is ‘Apostle’ but Greek for Missionary? They, more than other men, are set to see to it that the Saviour’s prescript be obeyed. ‘Preach the Gospel to every Creature.’”

* * * * *

“But the mother Church and the daughter have both waked up. Thank God for it! You and we believe heartily that bishops are the special, perpetual trustees of the Missionary work. They are Apostles. They go forth Apostles—Missionaries. They are the Chief Missionaries in their appointed fields. They carry with them the fulness of function and completeness of grace with which the Church is charged.”

* * * * *

“By the chartered constitution of the Church, and authoritative commission of the Ministry of the great forty days, and by the statutes and directions of the Nicene polity, we are on exactly the right line of conduct of the campaign when we make all the baptized to be the loyal liegemen of our Missionary host, and the Bishops to be the active generals in the field to lead them, in obeying the marching orders of the Great Commander, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.’”

It seems that some of our Missionary Societies are themselves feeling that their work is becoming too responsible for them to go on with: and they are hoping for the talked Board of Missions to arise and take it off their hands. Anyway, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has already intimated its readiness to surrender itself to such a Board as soon as it is called into existence: for in a leaflet which it is circulating, giving reasons why it should be supported, it gives as one reason:—“Because to support the S.P.G. is to pave the way for the distinct corporate provision by the Church in her Synods for missionary enterprise, as an integral part of her work. Purely volunteer efforts, however

loyal to the Church, have not the cogency which would belong to a more formally constituted organization. But until such a Board of Missions is created, the S.P.G., in virtue of its principles above stated, of its chartered status, and of its antiquity, surpassing by over a century any other Missionary Society of the Church, comes nearest to being such an agency, and affords the fairest prospect of its definite realization."

All this, then, the constitutional and more abundant promotion of the entire Home and Foreign Missionary enterprise of the Church of England, is the object of the following proposal, which is formulated with every regard for all concerned.

THE ORGANIZATION.

I. THE CHIEF AUTHORITY :—The whole Episcopate (Diocesan) of England and Wales. The Bishops to authorize and initiate the whole movement ; and to appoint the Pastoral Board, and the Board of Missions ; of which Boards they would always themselves be ex-officio members : the Primate always being president of each.

II. THE PASTORAL BOARD :—Four proportions out of five of the elected Members to be nominated severally by the two Lower Houses of Convocation, and by the two Houses of Laymen of the Provinces of Canterbury and York : the Bishops to nominate the remaining portion, and to complete the appointment of the whole of the nominees. The members to retire in rotation after serving seven years, re-appointment being allowable ; that is a seventh of them to retire each year. The Board to appoint its own Executive Council, the members of which should serve for seven years in any case, retiring in rotation : the Primate to be President ; the Bishops to appoint a permanent Vice-President of this Council.

III. THE BOARD OF MISSIONS :—This Board, and its Executive Council, to be appointed in the same way as the Pastoral Board and Council. But the permanent Vice-President of the Missions Council should be an experienced and enthusiastic Missionary Bishop.

IV. THE DIOCESAN BOARD OF TRUST AND ADMINISTRATION :— This Board to be appointed by the Bishop and Diocesan Conference or Synod ; to be changed septennially by rotation. This Board would not only co-operate with the Pastoral Board by assisting in the allocation of its funds within the diocese, as diocesan committees do now assist the Additional Curates' Society in some sixteen dioceses, but it could also hold and administer all sorts of purely diocesan funds, and foster all sorts of diocesan enterprises ; and it would be well qualified to deal in a responsible way with educational matters. The Secretary of this Board to be also the medium of all regular communication between the principal Boards and the Decanal Secretaries, and *vice versa*.

V. The Ruri-Decanal Secretary and Treasurer :— These officers to be appointed for seven years by the Clergy and Churchwardens of the Deanery, assembled under the presidency of the Rural Dean ; The Secretary to be ex-officio member of the Diocesan Board. This Secretary to be the decanal organizing officer of each of the Boards, and to be the medium of all regular communication between the diocesan Secretary and the parochial Secretaries of the Deanery, and *vice versa*.

VI. The Parochial Secretary and Treasurer :— These officers to be appointed annually at the annual meeting of the boxholders, on the nomination of the Incumbent, who could himself stand for either office, but by the vote of the boxholders present ; one box one vote. This Secretary to promote the Organization within the parish, and to be the medium of all regular communication between the boxholders and the decanal Secretary, and *vice versa*. In a large parish this Secretary would require a band of distributors to help him.

THE COLLECTION OF ALMS.

In addition to all the usual methods for obtaining funds for Church purposes, let a fourfold money box be used ; a box divided into four sections ; one section for the Pastoral Fund, one for the Missions Fund, one for the Diocesan Fund, and the other for a

Parochial Fund to be utilized within the parish according to the joint decision of the Incumbent and boxholders. This box to be offered for use by the parochial Secretary, and on the authority of the Bishops, at least to every householder in the parish who professes to adhere to the Church. A similar box, but larger, might be placed in every church.

All parochially collected alms should be regularly transmitted through the parochial, decanal, and diocesan Secretaries; and, through these Secretaries, in reverse order, the boxes and publications belonging to the Organization should be circulated.

A SPECIAL AND OFFICIAL PERIODICAL.

A Monthly Magazine, carefully designed to promote interest in this fourfold work of the Church, but especially in her Home and Foreign Missionary work, to be circulated among all the boxholders free of charge, on the authority of the Bishops; the cost of the copies distributed in a parish to be the first charge upon the parochial fund collected in the boxes of that parish. Diocesan Supplements might be added severally to this Magazine; and even parochial leaflets might be inserted. And this Magazine for all, so necessary to the Organization, could be supplemented by a more ample publication, to be sold to those who might desire it.

ORGANIZATION EXPENSES.

All, or nearly all, the secretarial work in the dioceses, deaneries, and parishes might be voluntarily done. Local expenses might be met out of the funds collected for local purposes; the cost of the boxes out of the Missions Fund; and other expenses, such as a Book of Directions for the carrying on of the whole organization, out of the Pastoral Fund.

Two sets of offices at the Church House would be sufficient for the whole Organization; one set for the work of the Pastoral Board, the other for the work of the Missions Board.

The Church of England is not too impotent, nor too bound by but modern tradition, to effect some such setting of her house in order as this, and so to rise to the unparalleled opportunities which the conclusion of the nineteenth century presents to her. And it certainly seems that a large majority, both of Bishops and of the Clergy, and also of such of the laity as are interested in the matter of Church progress, consider that the time is now ripe for some such movement. And if that is so, who is there that can efficiently say "Nay"?

And is it not our increasing desire for the healing of our divisions, as well as our desire for greater results, that is really propelling us in this direction of authoritative and united effort? For is it not becoming more and more apparent that so long as the Church of England acquiesces in the principle of government by societies, so long she stands committed to all the inconvenience of a divided camp? Do we not see, now that we are looking about to see how our divisions may be healed, that, however those divisions may have originated, and however they may have been fostered hitherto, it is our Executive Societies which are now the principal checks to unity? And this they cannot fail to be, however well intentioned and well ordered they may be, as it is the unavoidable result of their independent action. So let us have government by Constitutional Boards, by Boards which know nothing of partizanship; and views being left to the individual, partizanship would be likely to die out as a force within the Church, and that to the glory of God and the good of man.

The history of the Church of England during the last four centuries very much resembles a person fainting under an operation, and then coming to and getting to work again in improved health. The operation was the painful and protracted Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, consisting of the excision of foreign growths. This operation brought about that precarious state of collapse in which the Church lay during the eighteenth

century—a state of evangelical and catholic semi-consciousness. Towards the close of that century a spiritual revival commenced, the Evangelical Movement witnessing to an improved action of the heart. And during the present century the blood has been returning to the brain, and causing, as in the person who is recovering from a faint, all sorts of strange, thorny, doubting, and confused sensations, which, however, result in the return of consciousness: and if one word will describe this state of the Church's returning to full consciousness, that one word is "The Oxford Movement." And now that the Church of England has practically recovered from the effects upon herself of the Reformation, and is restored to evangelical earnestness and catholic consciousness; now that she is beginning to rejoice in her cleared constitution and in the restored vigour of her heart and head, she is desiring to discharge her vast vocation in a way she has never yet attempted.

The impartiality of such an Organization as is here suggested would be disabusive of all misgivings; its faithfulness to principle would attract the loyal on all sides; its authoritativeness would satisfy all lovers of order; its optionality, for it would be enforced nowhere, would check the sympathies of none; its *esprit de corps* would serve as a motive power with many whom nothing moves now; and, fully applied, its ubiquity would leave no Churchman unchallenged to help, nor, if he will, uninterested in the greatest work on earth—the work of the Saviour. And, organized in this way, the Church of England would be far more attractive to outsiders than she is in her present state of chaotic enterprise.

And surely all Church work that is now done for pure love of God under Societies would still be done for pure love of God under Boards.

The issue of the fourfold boxes, which would in all probability be very largely taken into use at the onset, would at once furnish the Boards with a sufficient allegiance, and with sufficient funds, with which to make a beginning. But it would have to be left to public opinion and to time to carry the whole ideal into complete effect.

And these boxes would serve several useful purposes. They would definitely include their holders within the Organization, and hold them in touch with the whole work of the Church; they would gather in the smaller donations of all, of rich and of poor alike; in conjunction with the Magazine, they would tend to educate their holders in the principles of self-sacrifice for Christ's sake, and draw out their sympathies more and more; they would be an object lesson to all, shewing the Church's plan of work, and her charity towards all sorts and conditions of men; and they would help to teach their holders their duty towards their neighbour in the place whence they have most to practice that duty, that is, in the home.

The Vice-President of the Missions Council would be a great power for good, both at home and in the mission field. There are many ways in which he might exert, from such a vantage ground, a wide and very beneficial influence; he would make his own missionary instinct felt, both homeward and outward; and it would be a great gain to have such a person to properly and sympathetically send forth the missionaries, and to receive them upon their return; which functions, however, the President of the Council would himself perform when able.

And in the Board of Missions there would be a strong body of reference, able to determine whatever questions might be referred to it from the mission field: or a committee of reference might be formed out of the Board.

Deputations would be nothing like so necessary under such a comprehensive, instructive, and perpetually active system as this as they are at present. And that would be a great relief to the many missionary Bishops who now find it necessary to come home from time to time, at great cost, and at great sacrifice of time, energy, and sometimes also of health, in order to hunt for men and money for their Missions, and often with such disappointing results. And it would be a great relief to many missionary clergy, who, under the existing state of things, have to go about as deputations when they ought to be recruiting their health in rest.

And if at anytime it were necessary to raise an emergency fund on behalf of some poor spot in the mission field overtaken by disaster it could be done in two or three weeks by the prompt employment of the whole series of Secretaries for the purpose. Or if £10,000 were urgently needed, as is frequently the case in these days, for the endowment of a missionary bishopric, such an amount could easily be raised in a very short time by a system so capable of prompt action throughout as this. Four hundred thousand sixpences, collected from, or through, the boxholders in a given week, would supply the endowment for the bishopric possibly within a fortnight of the special appeal being sent down from head-quarters.

The Church population of England and Wales is estimated, by different authorities, at from thirteen-and-a-half millions to twenty millions. Taking sixteen millions as quite a safe estimate; if this system were well applied, surely a half-a-million church people could be found, that is one in every thirty-two, or about a third of our communicants, who would have the boxes for regular purposes, and who would respond to urgent and special appeals in some small degree.

A responsible and economical system like this for gathering and employing alms would inspire donors with a far greater confidence than is now usual, when they give both by hand and by bequest.

The working expenses under such an Organization as this would amount to many thousands of pounds less than they do under the present many systems. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society alone spent £37,500 in working expenses in the year 1891, each Society spending £10,000 on Organizing Secretaries and deputations.

If ever the Church should be disestablished and disendowed, such an Organization as this would prove invaluable in the emergency. Or, better still, might it not rather be calculated, by its great establishing power, to secure us against even the possibility of Disestablishment?

The two principal Boards would probably not require to meet more often than half-yearly ; but their Councils would require to meet, perhaps, fortnightly.

Some of the personnel of the offices of such Societies as elect to merge themselves into the Boards, might, with great advantage, be departmentally employed under the Executive Councils, or upon those Councils.

The period of seven years, as the duration of the membership of the Boards, seems advisable so as to secure a continuous preponderance of experience amongst the elected members. A whole Board to go out, and a whole new Board to come in, would involve unadvisable hesitations, and perhaps misadventure, whilst the new Board is learning its work ; or it might involve great changes of administration being peremptorily effected when they would be better effected by degrees.

By the continuous system of resignation and appointment the representative men of the day could always be brought to the front to deal with things according to the mind of the Church of the day.

Authoritative and comprehensive method is what is wanted. Authoritative method, such as is here suggested, would in all probability very soon double what is now raised for the missionary work of the Church of England. It is authoritative method which produces such wonderful results in the missionary funds of the Nonconformist Societies. A vast amount of help is lost to the Church for want of a system that will gather it up. At the present time the Missionary Societies are supported, it is said, mainly by the clergy and the humbler classes. The great numbers of the well-to-do churchpeople do not attend missionary meetings ; nor do they see any-

thing of missionary literature; and there is nothing but the occasional missionary sermon which brings the matter before them at all, and even that they may not chance to hear. So an Organization of this kind, by which a collecting box, and a magazine continually supplying information, and both must go together, would be sent from the headquarters of the Church, a very different thing from their being sent from a Society, expressly to every Church householder in the country, should produce a very great addition to the present interest in, and support of, the work of the Church.

Scattered and independent battalions cannot be so effective as a united army acting under a single direction. So let the Church of England blend her forces, and place them under the control of her own constitutional authorities. And this may be done without fettering private sympathies, as between friends at home and friends in the mission field, that is without checking direct personal support of missions; and it may be done without entrenching upon diocesan or parochial authority; but rather a system like this would offer an authoritative centre of effort around which all individual and local sympathies would be free to act.

In the parishes, the box and the periodical, both of which would be supplied without stipulation, would be a convenience to all; but especially, perhaps, to the Clergy, who would find themselves relieved of much trouble and responsibility; and yet, at the same time, the system would greatly stimulate and assist their efforts in putting the duty of supporting the work of the Church before their people. And the only demand which the Organization would really make upon the Parochial Clergy would be that they, consenting to its introduction into their parishes, should preside at the Annual Meetings of the boxholders.

The parish is really the proper sphere for promoting organized almsgiving; but yet the parish cannot be adequately and uniformly

organized in the interest of the general work of the Church, unless that work is brought into constitutional order.

On Sundays when the weather is unpropitious, or sickness intervenes, the worshippers who are prevented from taking their alms to Church could place them in the box instead; and in this way hundreds of pounds would be saved to the Church, in the aggregate, on each such day.

The Anglican Church, both in Ireland and in Scotland, might be included within this organization to the general advantage. Only in both countries their present methods of home organization for administrative purposes would, of course, suffice; but it would certainly be to the advantage of both Scotland and Ireland for their Church needs to be brought adequately and constantly before the sympathetic notice of the Church people of England. And, although at the present time the Church of Ireland expends its missionary charity mainly, and the Church of Scotland in a less degree, through the English Missionary Societies, yet it would certainly also be advantageous to the Anglican cause for these three ancient sisters to be united in voluntary and organized missionary association.

The year 1897 will soon be here, and with it will come to our shores our Bishops from all the world over. The air will then be full of the memories of Augustine, and "of what we owe to him and of what we do not owe to him." But gratitude will predominate; gratitude for that great Church of England prelate, given to us by the charity of Rome, and for his work of thirteen centuries since; gratitude for the safe passage of the Church of England through all the intervening ages, ages that have often threatened her with papal absorption, or with wreck from over-reformation; gratitude that our British Church has come through the long-drawn ordeal of full sixteen centuries, and remains apostolically intact.

And what thankfulness there would be if, in that year also, our Bishops from abroad could come home and rejoice in their proper missionary relations with the Church at home ; holding intercourse with the Church herself, through her representative Board of Missions, and communing with that Board as with their very Mother. And what joy there would be amongst the children at home, thus to be able to welcome their fathers from abroad. And, our home organization being also perfected, how all would rejoice together to see the whole Church of England orderly and thoroughly equipped for her great work of the twentieth century.







